

Amendments to the Specification

Please add the following new heading before paragraph [0002]:

BACKGROUND

Please add the following new heading before paragraph [0012]:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Please replace paragraph [0012] with the following amended paragraph:

[0012] ~~The~~ An object of the present invention is to create a device and a method by which technical causes for differences, e.g., causes for different costs, may be determined between the same product components in different product types.

Please replace paragraph [0013] with the following amended paragraph:

[0013] ~~This object is achieved through~~ The present invention provides a device as recited in Claim 1 for comparing calculations for product components in different product types and a method as recited in Claim 11 and Claim 13 for comparing calculations for product components in different product types specifying an electronic listing of product types and an electronic parts list valid for each product of the product types of the listing, including a breakdown of each product into its components and features of components contained in the parts list. The method includes the following steps which are performed using a data processing system:

- saving automatically analyzable descriptions for each component occurring in the parts list in an electronic description database, each component description being valid for at least one product type occurring in the listing and including characteristics of the features of the component in this product type,
- saving calculations relating to a component occurring in the parts list and a product type occurring in the listing in an electronic calculation database,
- selecting at least one component occurring in the parts list,
- determining all calculations relating to the selected component in the electronic calculation database,

- determining the component descriptions that are included in the description database and are valid for the selected component and for the product types to which the calculations thus determined refer,
- and generating a comparison of the calculations thus determined and the component descriptions thus determined.

In another advantageous embodiment, the object of the invention is achieved by a method specifying an electronic listing of product types, an electronic attribute list containing attributes of a calculation and possible values of these attributes, the attribute list being valid for all components and all product types of the listing, an electronic parts list which is valid for each product of the product types of the listing, including a breakdown of a product into its components and features of components included in the parts list. In this preferred embodiment the method may include the following steps which are performed using a data processing system:

- saving automatically analyzable descriptions for each component occurring in the parts list in an electronic description database, each component description being valid for at least one product type occurring in the listing and including characteristics of the features of the component in this product type,
- saving calculations relating to a component occurring in the parts list and a product type occurring in the listing and to which attribute-attribute value pairs comprising attributes and attribute values of the attribute list are assigned in an electronic calculation database,
- selecting at least one attribute of the attribute list and a possible value of a selected attribute,
- determining all calculations which are saved in the calculation database and to which a selected attribute-attribute value pair is assigned,
- determining the component descriptions that are included in the description database and are valid for the component and for the product types to which the calculations thus determined refer,
- and generating a comparison of the calculations thus determined and the component descriptions thus determined.

~~Advantageous embodiments are defined by the subclaims.~~

Please replace paragraph [0026] with the following amended paragraph:

[0026] ~~In the embodiment as recited in Claim 2~~In another preferred embodiment of the present

invention, not only the product but also the product components occurring in the generic parts list are to be broken down. The parts list additionally includes an imaginary breakdown of each component into individual parts. This breakdown applies to all product types. At least one calculation in the calculation database includes information about the percentage of each part of the component on which the calculation is based on the result of the calculation. This information thus supplies a breakdown of the results of the calculation into the parts of the component to which the calculation relates. The comparison-generating device is able to generate a partial comparison for each part of the selected component. The partial comparison for each part shows the percentage each part has on the results of the calculations of the comparison. For example, the partial comparison shows the contributions of the parts to the results of the calculations. The comparison thus generated is preferably constructed in such a way that it includes all partial comparisons for the parts of the selected component.

Please replace paragraph [0029] with the following amended paragraph:

[0029] ~~In the refinement as recited in Claim 3~~ In another preferred embodiment, the generic parts list for each part includes at least one feature. This breakdown is valid for all product types. In addition, each component description in the component database includes the characteristics, i.e., the values or value ranges of the parts of the component in the particular product type. The comparison thus generated additionally includes the characteristics of the features of the parts of the selected component in the product types on which the calculations are based. Therefore, in addition to the calculations, the comparison shows the different configurations of the component in the product types. Each calculation for a component also includes the costs of the parts of the component.

Please replace paragraph [0030] with the following amended paragraph:

[0030] ~~In Claim 5~~ In another preferred embodiment, the calculations are related to costs, e.g., the manufacturing costs of components of the product types. The costs are composed of different cost types. The device includes an electronic list having the possible cost types of a calculation, this cost type list being in effect for all components of the parts list and all product types of the list. Therefore, the cost calculations are composed exclusively of cost types from this list. The calculation in the calculation database includes a partial calculation for each cost type from the

cost type list. It is possible that individual cost types in a calculation might not contribute anything to the result of the calculation, i.e., to the total costs. The comparison-generating unit includes means for breaking down a comparison that is generated into the cost types of the cost type list. This makes it possible for the comparison to differentiate the components in the product types with regard to various cost types and to determine technical causes for cost differences with regard to a certain cost type, for example.

Please replace paragraph [0031] with the following amended paragraph:

[0031] ~~In a refinement of this embodiment~~In another preferred embodiment, the device generates a comparison of cost calculations in which not all cost types but instead only certain previously selected cost types of the cost type list occur (~~Claim 6~~). The cost types not selected are automatically removed from the comparison.

Please replace paragraph [0032] with the following amended paragraph:

[0032] ~~In another refinement (Claim 7)~~In another preferred embodiment, the device makes it possible to generate an optimum calculation composed of partial calculations of the comparison. The device includes a unit which makes it possible to select a calculation contained in the comparison for each cost type of the cost type list. If, for example, the cost type list is made up of three different cost types, then each calculation in the comparison is made up of three partial calculations. The device makes it possible to select a first calculation for the first cost type, a second calculation for the second cost type, and a third calculation for the third cost type. The same calculation may be selected for different cost types. The selection is made, for example, by selecting the product type on which the calculation is based in each case.

Please add the following new heading before paragraph [0034]:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Please add the following new heading before paragraph [0043]:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Please replace paragraph [0069] with the following amended paragraph:

[0069] Subcost types are defined for these cost types. Some of these subcost types are mutually exclusive while others are complementary. There are the following subcost types for the cost of materials:

- individual cost of materials for materials purchased by the supplier of the particular component,
- materials overhead,
- cost of accessory parts purchased by the supplier for manufacture of the particular component,

cost of materials minus rebates.

Please replace paragraph [0087] with the following amended paragraph:

[0087] Figure 2 shows as an example the unit for selecting at least one component occurring in generic parts list 120. Web browser 190.1 on network client computer 20.1 generates a window 200.1 on the display screen after selecting selection point 211.1 of a network client computer 20.1. This window is broken down into two subwindows 201.1 and ~~201.2~~ 202.1. In left subwindow 201.1, a user selects the next action. Therefore, left subwindow 201.1 includes all three selection points 211.1, 211.2, and 211.3.

Please replace paragraph [0088] with the following amended paragraph:

[0088] Right subwindow ~~201.2~~ 202.1 also includes three permanently displayed selection menus 210.1, 210.2, and 210.3. In selection menu 210.1, the function modules of generic parts list 120 are displayed. Each function module here is represented by its two characterizing digits and its name, e.g., "10 cockpit." As soon as a user has selected one of these function modules, the partial systems of this function module are displayed in selection menu 210.2. After selecting the cockpit function module, the "dashboard" through "crossbeam" partial systems listed above are listed. Each partial system here is represented by the last two characterizing digits and its name, e.g., "10 dashboard." As soon as a user has selected one of these partial systems, the subsystems of this partial system are displayed in selection menu 210.3. After selecting the "dashboard" subsystem shown in selection menu 210.2, the "dashboard above" through "conductor set" subsystems are shown in selection menu 210.3, each being characterized by its last two digits, e.g., "60 vents, dashboard, and center console." After selecting the "vents, dashboard, and center

console" subsystem, a fourth selection menu 210.4 is generated and listed, displaying the main parts of the "vent, dashboard, and center console" subsystem contained in generic parts list 120, i.e., the main parts "defroster vent, outside left" through "mounting device for the knee guard vent."

Please replace paragraph [0111] with the following amended paragraph:

[0111] Figure 6 shows as an example window 200.4 with subwindows 201.4 and 202.4 for the selection operations in the second step. Right subwindow 202.4 includes three subwindows 203.1, 203.2, and 203.3. Subwindow 203.1 includes a virtual button 240.1 for establishing that the most up-to-date status should be selected and an input field 241.1 for input of a period of time. Subwindow 203.2 includes a selection menu (not shown) for selecting a breakdown level. Subwindow 203.3 is for selecting a product component of the breakdown level selected in subwindow 203.2. One possibility is for subwindow 203.3 to be designed as described above and as illustrated in Figure 2 and Figure 4, i.e., with selection menus 210.1 through 210.4. Figure 6, however, shows an alternative embodiment. The user selects a component either by inputting its ID digits or by selection with the help of selection menus. Subwindow 203.3 has five input fields 241.2 through 241.6 for this purpose and five selection menus for function modules, partial systems, subsystems, main parts, and subparts, of which Figure 6 shows selection menu 210.1 for function modules and two selection menus 210.6 for main parts and 210.7 for subparts. To select the main part "defroster vent, outside left," the user enters either the digits "10" into input field 241.2, or "10" into input field 241.3, "60" into input field 241.4, and "001" into input field 241.4. Or the user selects function module "cockpit" in selection menu 210.1, then selects the "dashboard" partial system in selection system 210.2, then selects the subsystem "vents, dashboard, and center console," and finally selects the main part "defroster vent, outside left" in selection menu 210.6.

Please replace paragraph [0113] with the following amended paragraph:

[0113] After the search for calculations has been specified in the ~~third conclusion~~ step, Internet response program 180 searches for calculations corresponding to the requirements of the specification. For example, the user has specified in the second step that the most current status is to be selected, the main part "defroster vent, outside left" is selected, and in the third step

"upper class sedan" is specified as the vehicle segment. All calculations related to the main part "defroster vent, outside left" in vehicle types of the vehicle segment "upper class sedan" and not replaced by a more current calculation are then determined.

Please replace paragraph [0125] with the following amended paragraph:

[0125] Functions from the subgroup "generate and display new comparisons for an attribute of the calculations" are described below as an example. The user specifies, for example, that he would like to generate a comparison related to different components of the same supplier. The user makes the following stipulations:

- The user selects a supplier from supplier list 140.
- The user optionally limits the search to certain types of cost calculations, e.g., negotiation results and bids. Without such a restriction, the search will be directed to calculations of all types.

The user will optimally limit the search to certain product components. For example, he will specify that a search should be conducted only in the subsystem "dashboard and center console vents." A search is then conducted for calculations related to this subsystem and the main parts and subparts contained in the subsystem according to generic parts list 120. Or the user selects multiple main parts belonging to different function modules. Without such a restriction, the search will include calculations for all product components.

Please amend the heading on top of page 36 with the following amended heading:

~~Patent claims~~ WHAT IS CLAIMED IS: